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MONTREAL, MARCH 12, 1887

THE WEEK.

We have already had occasion to urge the propriety of having a resident agent at Washington. The practical uses of such an officer are obvious and a further result would be the gradual assumption by Canadians of their own treaties and international negotiations, at least in commercial matters.

The retaliation bill passed by Congress and signed by the President is a petty exhibition unworthy of a great and generous people. The Americans know perfectly well that our interpretation of the treaty of 1818 is the only correct one, and that we are bound, in self respect, to carry it out. The threat of reprisals is therefore very paltry.

Fortunately the execution of the measure is left in the hands of Mr. Cleveland, who is both wise and just enough not to push it to extremes. But even if he did this, Canadians will get no harm, as the trifling material loss which our fishermen may suffer from American aggressiveness, will be willingly made good by our government.

The Province of Nova Scotia finds itself in an awkward, not to say ridiculous, position, as a result of the late Federal elections. Eight months ago it chose nearly a full assembly on the cry of repeal, and now it has sent almost as many representatives to Ottawa, as the sworn enemies of secession. What the Provincial Government will continue to do in the face of such an anomaly is a problem.

In the Province of Quebec the parties are pretty equally divided, and the question of race and nationality is at rest for the time being. The Mercier government have entered upon the routine of administration, and so long as they make no wrench in the ordinary machinery, it is to be hoped that

they will meet with no factious opposition.

As we have said before, it makes no difference what men or what party rule at Quebec. The main point is to keep the Provincial exchequer in good order, maintain a strict balance between revenue and expenditure, and turn all legislation straightly and squarely to the material development of the province.

There are anomalies in the electoral law, and the instrument has proved too cumbersome for several of the returning officers. More than one queer result has been the consequence of oversight or blundering, and doubtless practical injustice will be done to candidates in more instances than one. In the case of Chateaugay, for instance common sense demanded that Mr. Holton should not be made the victim of ignorance and neglect.

We have already pronounced in favor of manhood suffrage, and we hereby reaffirm our position. Practically manhood suffrage exists and its declaration in black and white would only enhance the good name of Canada. Besides, it would materially simplify the election law. Let manhood suffrage be proclaimed at the ensuing session of Parliament.

The opening of the session is set for April 12. The date is later than usual, but this was unavoidable on account of the elections. It is expected that the sittings will not be necessarily protracted, and that only practical legislation will be carried out. Elections are understood to settle old scores, and the first session of a new Parliament generally deals with a clear balance.

While cities and provinces may well be left to their own impulses, the Pictorial Times would suggest that our participation in the Queen's Jubilee should take on a Dominion character, and we appeal to the Federal Government to make it such. The details may be left to the administration, in the confidence that the demonstration will be made worthy of Her Majesty and of her Premier Colony.

The year 1887 is the semi-centennial anniversary of another event, deeply interesting to the people of the old Canada. The uprising of 1837 took place in both Upper and Lower Canada, and the whole colony was involved in it. We shall refer to its main features according as they come up chronologically.

The current year is furthermore the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Confederation, and as such is deserving of special commemoration. The union of all the provinces of British America into one homogeneous government has been the corner stone of our nationality, and in twenty short years has wrought marvels of development such as the whole world has admired.

Some surprise has been expressed that, whereas Cardinal Taschereau unequivocally condemned the Knights of Labor, Cardinal Gibbons is as warmly pleading their cause at Rome. The conditions are quite different. In Canada, the Knights are scarcely organized and the Cardinal attacked them on theoretical grounds. In the United States the Knights are an almost omnipotent social and political factor, and the Church naturally seeks to find a *modus vivendi* with them.

The news from England during the whole of the last week points to a

weakening of the government forces, and a gradual return to the view of Mr. Gladstone as to the opportuneness and even pressing necessity of Home Rule. The Salisbury administration is clearly in favor of strong measures and is therein backed by the metropolitan press, but the appearances are that Parliament will not support open coercion.

The chances of war between France and Germany have lessened rather than increased during the last eight or ten days. Bismarck has gained his point by securing a majority of the Reichstag, although feeling keenly the defection of Alsace Lorraine, and will not take the responsibility of further provoking France. On her side, France has been admirable in her calm dignity, thereby enlisting the sympathies of Europe.

BRIC A BRAC.

The accession to office of Hon. J. J. Abbott has been attended with circumstances of particular interest. The little acrimony of the election were set aside, and the new mayor will be installed in the civic chair amid the good will and the sincere plaudits of all classes of the community.

Greet the coming and speed the parting guest. Mayor Beaupré, at the termination of his duties as chief magistrate of Montreal, receives the thanks and acknowledgments of his fellow citizens and the banquet, given in his honor, at the Windsor Hotel, was one of the heartiest and most spontaneous tributes of the kind ever offered to a faithful servant. With M. Beaupré it is not farewell, but *au revoir*.

We are full in the Lenten season and the dreary cold weather gives it an appropriate penitential aspect. Balls and parties, private reunions and festive conclaves are set aside, and the long evenings are spent in the seclusion of the fireside. There is no harm in this, but rather good. A few weeks of relative silence and quietude are eminently fitted to the recuperation of the mind.

In another way, however, we do not do justice to the forty days of Lent. Our markets are not sufficiently well supplied with the proper articles of food. Fish is the principal staple and there is no finer fish country than Canada, yet we cannot procure such quantities and varieties as are palatable and cheap. What do we want of canned and smoked fish, when we can supply ourselves with so much fresh?

Neither is justice done to our native oysters. The Malpeque, admittedly the most luscious half shell oyster in the world, can be obtained only raw, while it should be so cultivated as to be susceptible of all kinds of cookery. It is bad enough that our Bouctouches, St. Simons and Caraquettes should have been allowed to die out. The same fate ought to be allowed to overtake the Malpeque.

It takes outsiders.—Englishmen and Americans—to appreciate the value of our fisheries, and to enjoy the rare sport attendant upon the fishing season. Mr. Thomas Hope, an English gentleman, writes to Mr. H. Hogan, of Montreal, that the fishing at home is not to be compared to the fishing in Canada, and he is eagerly anticipating his next visit to our banks and streams.

Then look at our venison. This is the time when we ought to have it at the best, to replace the duck, partridge

goose and turkey which served their time during the whole winter. The moose, caribou, and deer, as they hang up in quarters in the stalls, have no inviting aspect about them. They are badly cut, and not put forward in tempting style.

February went out as it came, in mountains of snow, high winds and the severest of cold. There were not more than one or two mild days in the whole month. The first week in March was no better, and all the indications are now that this exceptional winter will continue until Easter. Lucky will it be if we escape floods and other disasters in the spring.

One good result of the long spring will be the abundance of maple syrup and sugar. The conditions are—plenty of snow in the woods, frosty nights and mild thaws during the day. Here is another industry in which we have let the Americans excel. They make better maple sugar in Vermont than in the Island of Montreal.

The maples stand in rows. Each one is notched at the height of about a foot or a foot and a half from the ground. A piece of shingle is fastened in to the lips of the wound, at an angle of 45, and down this trickle the sweet waters in a trough set at the foot of each tree. There stand the forest wives distilling their milk, while the white sunlight rests on their silver trunks, and the soft winds of March dally with their leafless branches.

The sugarman has his eye fixed on each of them, and as fast as the urns are filled, he empties them into a large vessel preparatory to boiling. In an open space, toward the centre of the area, is a huge cauldron hanging from a hob, and under it crackles a fire of pine and tamarac. At a little distance from this stands the cabin of the owner, where are stowed away all the utensils necessary for sugar making. There too his hammock swings for, during the whole period when the maple beeds, he lives like an Indian in the forest. We shall tell of his amusements next week.

PERSONAL.

The Comte de Lesseps visits Berlin on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of Kaiser Wilhelm.

Our own Albani is having phenomenal success in Berlin. She sings in German and has studied the chief of Wagner's operas.

Coralie Lajeunesse, Albani's sister, made all her musical studies in Germany. She accompanies her distinguished sister everywhere.

Joseph Theodoro Therien, a "patriote" of 1837-38, died last week at a ripe old age. His companions are getting scarce.

Hon. James McShane, the new Quebec Commissioner in Public Works, is to be tendered of public banquet in Montreal. He deserves it.

Hon. John Beverly Robinson is spoken of as Canadian resident agent in Washington. No fitter appointment could be made.

As was to be expected, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is fast returning to Mr. Gladstone and will hereafter work for the consummation of Home Rule.

The Lieutenant Governor of Quebec will return to Quebec from Bermuda by the 14th, so as to be in time for the opening of the Assembly on the 16th.

Cardinal Taschereau will sail from Havre for New-York on the 26 April. The Roman consistory which he attends will have concluded its labors by that time.